

PROTECTED B

**Meeting of the Cabinet Committee
on Safety, Security and Emergencies**

Date: Sunday, February 6, 2022

Time: 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

We have been advised that the Cabinet Committee on Safety, Security and Emergencies is scheduled to meet virtually on Sunday, February 6th from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. to discuss the ongoing protests in the National Capital Region. An agenda has not yet been provided. However, we anticipate that additional details will be provided in your meeting invitation.

DEMONSTRATIONS IN OTTAWA

For nearly a week, protests against government mandates for COVID-19 vaccines and masks, as well as restrictions on certain businesses, notably those applying to the transportation sector, have been underway in the streets surrounding Parliament Hill.

On February 4th, the Ottawa Police announced its intention to increase measures to support neighbourhoods in downtown Ottawa. More specifically, they have announced a new “surge and contain” strategy in order to restore order, hold offenders to account and protect neighborhoods. The strategy includes sending 150 more officers to affected neighbourhoods to target unlawful behaviour connected to the ongoing occupation.

There are currently 200 to 250 trucks parked in the city, and over the February 4-6th weekend, police are expecting 300 to 400 trucks to attempt to enter the downtown core, along with up to 2,000 people on foot. Police are also expecting approximately 1,000 counter-protesters. The demonstrators remain highly organized, well-funded, and committed to resisting efforts to end the demonstration safely. This remains a very volatile and increasingly dangerous demonstration.

As you know, on January 29th you approved a Request for Assistance to support law enforcement officials by providing them with access to DND/CAF infrastructure. This RFA has now concluded however indications are that it may be enacted again sometime over the weekend.

We also understand that the Province of Alberta sent a formal Request for Assistance to the Minister Public Safety seeking federal support for towing as local companies have been unwilling to support. Currently, this request is not specifically directed at the CAF, but there is a possibility that the CAF could be approached. While the CAF does have limited heavy equipment with limited capacity to tow trucks, it is not recommended that a request of this nature be supported. It could be perceived as militarizing the crisis and providing fodder for further propaganda.

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